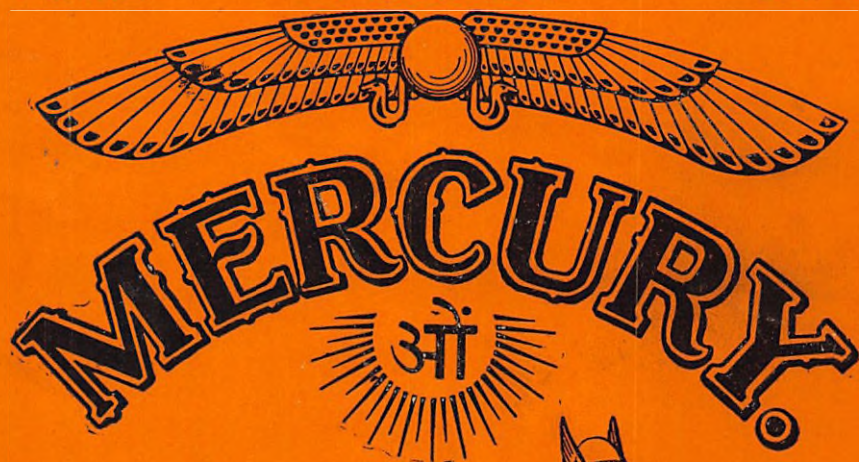


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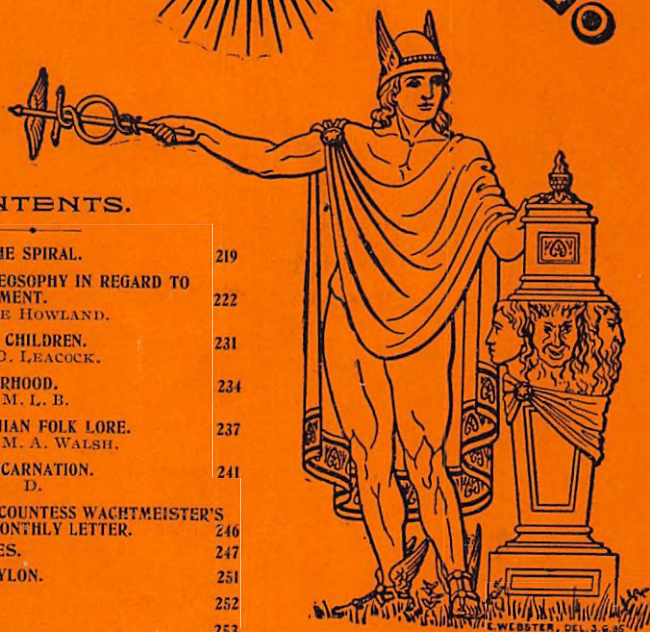
March 1898.

No. 7.



CONTENTS.

ANOTHER TURN OF THE SPIRAL.	219
THE ATTITUDE OF THEOSOPHY IN REGARD TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.	222
MARIE HOWLAND.	
ON THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN.	231
M. O. LEACOCK.	
THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD.	234
M. L. B.	
A GLIMPSE OF HAWAIIAN FOLK LORE.	237
MISS M. A. WALSH.	
EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION.	241
D.	
T. S. ECHOES. - THE COUNTESS WACHTEMEISTER'S MONTHLY LETTER.	246
REPORTS OF BRANCHES.	247
AN APPEAL FROM CEYLON.	251
BOOK REVIEWS.	252
T. S. DIRECTORY.	253



DEVOTED TO
THE STUDY OF THEOSOPHY, ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY,
THE OCCULT SCIENCES AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.
ISSUED MONTHLY.

WILLIAM JOHN WALTERS, - - - Managing Editor.

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❧NOTICE.❧

This Magazine being devoted to the study of Theosophy, the Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any theories or statements put forward, unless contained in an official document.

The Editors will endeavor to answer satisfactory, but of necessity briefly, any question addressed to them in a spirit of serious enquiry, if pertaining to the subjects to which *MERCURY* is devoted.

Communications for the T. S. Echoes and Forum Departments should be in the hands of the Editors by the 20th of each month if intended for the following month's issue.

The Editors can in no case be responsible for the accidental loss of manuscript.

All Editorial Correspondence and Books for Review should be addressed to

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PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



Satyan Nasti Para Dharmah.

Objects of the Theosophical Society.

To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

Any persons interested in the subjects treated of in *MERCURY* or desiring information as to the Theosophical Society, which is especially occupied with these studies, are invited to communicate with any of the following General Secretaries:

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MERCURY

Official Organ of the American Section, T. S.

VOL. IV. No. 7. SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. MARCH, 1898.

ANOTHER TURN OF THE SPIRAL.

GOLDEN Gate Branch and MERCURY invite all their friends, all their readers, to visit them at their new headquarters, if not in the body, out of it—whether they come physically, astrally, or mentally, they may feel assured of a most hearty welcome.

The following cut gives a fine view of the Odd Fellows' Building, with the sign designating the windows of the Branch rooms and printing office. The location is most desirable, being on the main street of the city, near the City Hall, and close to the site of the new post office. The rooms are pleasant and commodious, seating conveniently 150 people. However, the public meetings are held in a hall of the same building.

A peculiar persistence in numbers follows Golden Gate. The first headquarters opened February, 1890, at room 5, No. 13 Mason street. In the fall of the year a removal was made to another location and to rooms 5 and 6. Once again the Branch moved, and again to rooms 5 and 6. At this place the Branch was torn asunder by the secession; but when the loyal portion, after reconstruction, again opened public headquarters, the numbers 5 and 6 marked its location. Stranger yet, it was on Mason street, the *locale* of the first impulse that the Branch began its new spiral. The present removal adds to the constant 5 and 6 the mystic

number 7; room 7 is the home of Mercury. Moreover, Odd Fellows' Building stands on the corner of seventh street. The magical 7 has already proved itself an augury of good fortune, for the initial public meeting saw the American Section declared before the world as the one only Theosophical Society.

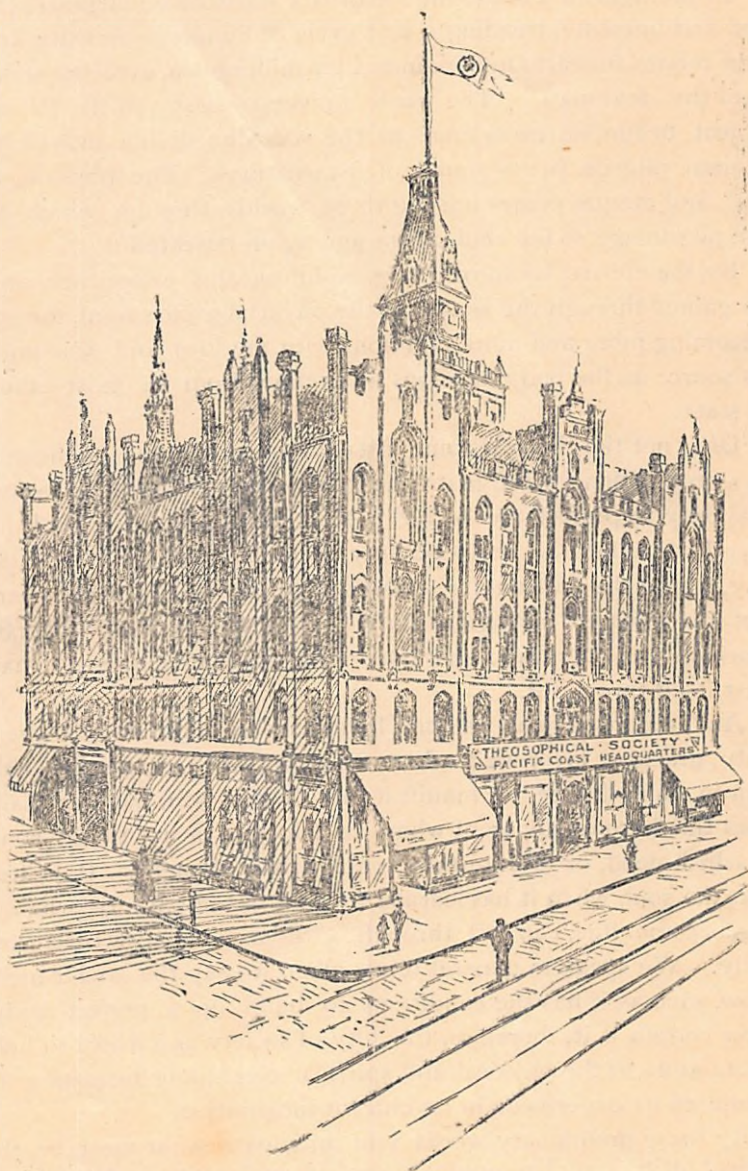
The name so dear to lovers of H. P. B., so sacred to the followers of the Masters, once more belongs solely to its own, to those who fought the good fight, who chose principle and rejected personality. Surely they "builted better than they knew." Krishna is with them. It is through this strength born of conviction of truth that the society has been able to withstand the shocks of defection, calumny and secession and now stands vigorous and healthy, filled with fresh life, a living testimony of the Masters' power, that power which has been manifested at every step in the history of the T. S.; that power which will yet bring together all earnest seekers of truth, all selfless workers for a higher ideal of life and reunite them in Theosophia.

But the struggle is not yet over. For some time, yea for all time, each and all must stand watchful at the post of duty, and courageously, through concentrated effort, unity of purpose, and hard work, establish the new cycle of truth, unity, love, and peace, of right thinking and right doing in the hearts of men. The field is vast and the workers few.

But hard work with united purpose will accomplish marvels. Branches, Centers, Headquarters are only other names for persistent hard work, work of the hands as well as work of the head. There are envelopes to address, leaflets to fold, rooms to be kept in order, calls to be made, lines of communication to be kept active, work, work everywhere. And is it not a privilege to work for the truth, to serve humanity, to help the Masters in their plans to aid the race? If each one realized the fullness of this privilege, all that it means to each one, every center would glow with activity, every F. T. S. would be an eager, cheerful worker, no matter how obscure its work, and the cause of truth would be triumphant.

Let us then be up and doing, never pausing, never faltering, each one doing whatever he can, working in the certitude of faith, helping lovingly others to do their part, leaving all results to the blessed Masters who see, who aid, who guide all who work for

that movement whose watchword is, "Theosophy first, last and all the time."



THE ATTITUDE OF THEOSOPHY IN REGARD TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.*

✓ In the light of Theosophy "man is a spiritual intelligence, eternal and uncreate, treading a vast cycle of human experience, born and reborn on earth, millennium after millennium, evolving slowly into the ideal man." The whole universe exists solely for one object, to furnish experience to the soul, the divine monad, the eternal pilgrim, in its round of incarnations. The physical, astral, and mental planes are the three worlds through which lies the pilgrimage of the soul, again and again repeated.

By the eternal laws governing evolution, this experience must be gained through the senses of the physical encasement, the soul becoming more and more luminous with the love and wisdom of its source as the body develops and refines from its most ethereal state.

Does not the thought come instantly to every one on hearing this proposition for the first time, "Why, then, it must be a primal duty to perfect the body?" Most certainly it is; and not merely an ethical or aesthetic duty, as understood by society, to-day, where the passion for athletic training is rife everywhere; but it is a sacred, a religious duty, to glorify the body that the glorified soul may more and more perfectly, that is, divinely, manifest itself through it.

And, regarded in an esoteric light, to this high end is every duty, grace, or favor we perform for a brother; *i. e.*, we thus help him in some degree, to manifest his diviner self, but especially does this become apparent when we help him or her to do some unselfish deed, or to entertain some nobler thought. It is true that the soul, when it has learned to walk in the path, or when it has become free, can act through a diseased, almost exhausted body. We speak in general terms when we say the soul cannot grow, save as it has the conditions to build up a perfect body. How certain is it, therefore, the duty of society as a whole to help all its units to the physical and spiritual conditions necessary to complete its experience in its current incarnation.

By these preliminary words you anticipate what must be the logical attitude of Theosophy toward any voluntary destruction, or

*A paper read before the Olcott Lodge of Kansas City, January 14, 1898, by the Vice-President, M. H.

even any injury to the human body, the temple through which is manifest that "Omnipotent, immutable principle on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude."

To make it still clearer why we must not destroy the body, let us consider the esoteric instruction we have received regarding its perishable parts or sheaths, as the Eastern teachers call them; for the body is composed of three principal envelopes, one only, the inner or dense body, being visible to the undeveloped eye. It is necessary to understand the relation of the soul to its sheaths or bodies before we can see clearly why it is so terrible a crime to wilfully destroy life, to use the common expression; for, in reality, life continues, the eternal pilgrim continues its journey, though sadly impeded by accidental death, suicide, and signally so by legal or other murder.

The dense body, then, is the interior one composed of materials of the "physical plane, solids, liquids and gases." Interpenetrating the dense body is the etheric double, the *doppelgänger* of the German tongue. This is said to be violet-gray or blue-gray in color, and, in the words of "Ancient Wisdom" by Annie Besant, is composed of materials drawn from the higher levels. The general function of the physical body is to receive contacts from the physical world, and send the report of them inward, to serve as materials from which the conscious entity inhabiting the body is to elaborate knowledge. Its etheric portion has also the duty of acting as a medium through which the life-currents poured out from the sun can be adapted to the uses of the denser particles. The sun is the great reservoir of the electrical, magnetic, and vital forces for our system, and it pours out abundantly these streams of life-giving energy. They are taken in by the etheric doubles of all minerals, vegetables, animals and men, and are by them transmuted into the various life energies needed by each entity. The etheric doubles draw in, specialize, and distribute them over their physical counterparts. It has been observed that in vigorous health much more of the life-energies are transmuted than the physical requires for its own support, and that the surplus is rayed out and is taken up and utilized by the weaker. What is technically called the health aura is the part of the etheric

double that extends a few inches from the whole surface of the body and shows radiating lines, like the radii of a sphere, going out in all directions. These lines droop when vitality is diminished below the point of health, and resume their radiating character when the vigor is renewed. It is this vital energy specialized by the etheric double which is poured out by the healer for the restoration of the weak and for the cure of disease, although he often mingles with it currents of a more rarefied kind."

At the moment of a normal death the "lord of the body" slowly 'draws itself away, enwrapped in the violet-gray ethereal body, absorbed in the contemplation of the panorama of his past life, which in the death-hour unrolls before him, complete in every detail. In that life picture are all the events of his life, small and great" . . . "Solemn the moment when the man stands face to face with his life, and from the past hears the presage of his future. For a brief space he sees himself as he is, recognizes the purpose of life, knows that the law is strong, and just, and good. Then the magnetic tie breaks between the dense and the etheric bodies, the comrades of a lifetime are disjointed, and, save in exceptional cases, the man sinks into peaceful unconsciousness." This is the teacher's description of a normal death. The "exceptional cases," of which she speaks are those where the death is not peaceful but violent, as in the case of murder, or of capital punishment. In these cases the victims cannot free themselves from the etheric body. In the words of the same teacher, "they remain conscious, often entangled in the final scene of earth-life, and unaware that they have lost the physical body." They are held conscious in "whatever region they are related to" by their passions and desires, in other words, by the third sheath, the desire body, technically called the astral body. Here they must remain until the natural web of life is out-spun before the normal *kamalokic*, or normal first stage of the after-death experience, can commence. Quoting again from "Ancient Wisdom," "They are vividly conscious of both their astral and physical surroundings. One man who had committed an assassination and had been executed for his crime was said by one of H. P. Blavatsky's Teachers to be living through the scenes of the murder and the subsequent events over and over again in Kama Loka, ever repeating his diabolical act and going through the terrors of his

execution."

Capital punishment, aside from its desecration of the soul's tabernacle, aside from its inhumanity, aside from the moral effects on the community of the awful scenes of the guillotine and the gallows, repeated in every daily paper, incurs a still more lasting and terrible result after the execution of the criminal. Hear the same voice, describing the lowest region of Kama Loka, the land of shadows. She is speaking of these results, first upon the victims of violent death, and then of their dire influence upon the living. "Unchanged, except for the loss of the bodily veil, men here show out their passions in all their native hideousness, their naked brutality; full of fierce, unsatiated appetites, seething with revenge, hatred, longing after physical indulgences which the loss of physical organs incapacitates them from enjoying, they roam, raging and ravening through this gloomy region, crowding around all foul resorts on earth, round brothels and gin-palaces, stimulating their occupants to deeds of shame and violence, seeking opportunities to obsess them, and so to drive them into worse excesses. The sickening atmosphere felt about such places comes largely from these earth-bound astral entities, reeking with foul passions and unclean desires." * * "Executed murderers, furious with terror and revengeful hatred, acting over again, as we have said, their crime, and recreating mentally its terrible results, surround themselves with savage thought-forms, and, attracted to anyone harboring revengeful and violent designs, they egg him on to the actual commission of the deed over which he broods."

Does not this terrible passage throw light upon that remarkable fact known as "an epidemic of crime" a signal illustration of which we have in the brutal murders following closely upon the execution of Carr in this city?

The Theosophical Society has been censured for not taking more active part in reforming the evils of the world. Members, as individuals, enter into whatever reformatory field they desire to labor in, but the society, as such, is organized to study and teach the great principles of universal brotherhood and the occultism of the East as the key to those principles, and they will not be distracted from this purpose.

Occultism recognizes the fact that all methods of preventing

crime must be merely palliative and temporary in result until the great truth of the law of Karma shall sink into the soul and become a part of the consciousness like the instinct that prevents us from cutting and slashing our bodies. Karma is but the law of equilibrium acting in the moral world; and there can be no more exception to the law that as we sow so shall we reap, than there can be to the law of gravitation; and like the law of gravitation it must apply everywhere. As above so below. As with the individuals, so with nations; as with nations and worlds, so with solar systems throughout space. The slow and painful growth of a planet like this, the disorders and cataclysms, show Kosmic bad Karma; the sowing of the wind and the reaping of the whirlwind.

Students of Theosophy have the word Karma often upon the tongue, but we must accept it with the understanding and through the study of natural law which is, of course, always universal law. It is true that the soul feels instinctively that evil effects must follow evil thoughts, as the night the day; but this instinct, this writing on the heart, except in the case of sensitive and spiritually favored individuals, is so bedimmed by false teaching, false ethics, false living, that it is like the original text on the rubbed and scraped surface of a palimpsest. Still, the writing is there, and I do not believe that any amount of sin can totally efface it. Sin, we must remember, is committed in the soul, not in the deed. The soul alone can sin. By the awkward handling of an implement you may destroy your friend, yet have committed no sin, and incurred no Karma, save what might be due to the fault of carelessness. But the effect of that taking off is far-reaching. For one thing, the total of the earth's population is by so much affected. With real sin, the personal, Karmic results are according to the evil intent; and that there is no possible escape from retribution, constitutes the justice and the stability of the universe. The weakness and the moral cowardice of the world lies in the ever-stimulated hope that there may be some possible escape from the effects of sin. If we have wronged a brother we may compensate or satisfy him by generous deeds; but the Karma of the thoughts engendering the wrong must go echoing through eternity. The knowledge of this law, and this alone, can "save" the soul. As long as there remains a shadow of hope that another's sufferings or another's virtues can effect our "sal-

wation," just so long will our spiritual growth be slow and painful.

In the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago, the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, uttered these words: "What religion can wash Lady Macbeth's red right hand? That is the question I propose to the four continents and to the isles of the sea. Unless you can answer that, you have not come here with a serious purpose." So long continued has been the teaching that such red hands can be made white by some jugglery of vicarious atonement, that our religious teachers are blind to the fact of the great law of Karma. They really think that there should be some way provided by the Creator, by which escape from the effect of sin and crime may be effected! Such teachers stand in the way of the world's moral progress, whether they know the factor not. The coming teachers, whose advance corps are already in every quarter of the earth, are inculcating a higher doctrine, the doctrine of the responsibility of every individual, not only for his deeds, but for every thought form that he creates and sends forth to do its work of good or evil.

It is profitable to reflect often and intently upon the stupendous responsibility resting upon us! We are the "children of God" in the profoundest sense, taking conscious or unconscious part in the building, aye, and in the preservation of the world. Grand, beyond description, is our place in nature, our destiny in the universe; and the inculcation of this doctrine in childhood and youth will do more than aught else to insure serious and useful lives. But all things must come about slowly according to the fixed laws of progress. We are now living in the last days of the black or iron age, technically, the Kaliyuga, age of strength, of war and conquest, of crime and legal punishment.

According to the "Secret Doctrine" we enter the second "Trete," or the silver age between 1898 and 1899; but according to the learned writer of an article in the English Theosophical Journal, *Lucifer** the silver age will commence five years hence, or in 1902.

The student of esoteric science perceives the dawn of the better age in the perturbations in every department of human activity. Higher conceptions of man's destiny are spreading all over the world, following a marvelous increase in secular learning, in discoveries and inventions. The extended recognition of wom-

*Volume XIX No 114.

an's destiny, the recognition of the rights of children, the increasing horror of the death penalty, and the reformation of the methods of dealing with prisoners, are all significant facts to him, but the signal, the inspiring proof that we are entering a more luminous age, will be given when commences the open teaching of the doctrine that man's destiny is to take conscious control of the earth. To this end are the telegraphic lines, now for the first time encircling the earth, affording the necessary means for that rapid intercommunication essential to the working out of many problems, especially those of meteorology, a science in which we are making sure if not rapid advance. Man already asserts his mastery more and more definitely over elements heretofore regarded as his invincible enemies. Through the study of forestry he begins to control the fall of the rain, and through great and ever increasing systems of irrigation he escapes the catastrophe of drouths. To be sure his method of dealing with cyclones is, as yet, primitive, and somewhat cowardly. He crawls into a hole still, this preserves him for a future more scientific and brave attack of the problem. He has learned to herald coming storms and to look into their causes from the standpoint of science. Fierce winds, drouths, and floods, and very sudden changes of temperature, will disappear when people unite to beautify and redeem the earth with half the energy they expend in supporting armies, navies, and inventions to murder each other. The vast expense of these, and of all the paraphernalia for the punishment of crime, will pass away as soon as man comprehends his destiny on the planet. He takes a narrow view of that destiny now, but his horizon is widening.

Occultists are too prone to follow the methods of the old-school theologian, and think that we may advance spiritually without much study of our duty as regards the improvement of the surface of the earth, or without recognizing that that spiritual advance must go side by side with effort to make the earth glorious for the coming higher race whose coming must be delayed until the earth is ripe for them, not merely spiritually, but physically. That coming race will do the final work, no doubt; but we must prepare the way for their coming, which cannot be a sudden advent, but gradual and slow like that of the present one. Sages and prophets have always foreseen the coming better age, the

millennium, or by whatever name called, and to discuss the destiny of man on any planet, without considering that his control of its material or physical part must closely follow his mastery of the suotler or spiritual forces, is illogical. He is to drain the swamps and marshes, and reclaim all malarial regions; terrace and cultivate the mountains, thus bringing nearly together, in all tropical regions, the different climates of the temperate zones, by the terrace altitude. He is to plan gardens more beautiful than those of the fabled Hesperides, and build his cities of palaces, gigantic in proportion, therein. All the inventions enabling us to conquer distance will be perfected. Every condition now existing to produce noisome odors and repulsive sights, breed wild beasts, animal pests and vermin, disease, ugliness, vice, and crime, will be eliminated. To prevent, not destroy, will be the watchword.

Is it a dream? But all progress, all attainment is but the realization of our dreams. Let us regard it as a sacred duty to never waken from our dreams of heaven.

But, returning to the more prosy subject we were considering, we wish to say of methods of controlling the disorderly, that no greater mistake ever prevailed than that coercion is or can be a moralizing force. We may have to deprive of liberty those who are morally irresponsible, but even in the case of the insane gentle methods have been found the most effective. Gentle methods, however, cannot be put into practice save by the gentle heart. Love may be wanting in the brutal nature, but the club is always available, and such a nature does not know that outward yielding is not obedience. Obedience can take place only in the heart. Happily the truth is being more and more accepted that brutal natures should never be put in charge of schools, asylums, reformatories, or prisons. The brutalized criminal despises his brutal jailer, but more readily yields obedience to a firm, gentle nature. The knout has been abolished in Russia, and gradually the whole theory of prison discipline is changing. Capital punishment has long been abolished in Switzerland, and the statement goes unchallenged that there are less murders there in proportion to the population than in any other country of the world. The Swiss have advanced ideas of prison discipline. Under this head I find a long article in the Encyclopædia Britannica, and among a mass of interesting matter, notably the history of British penal colo-

nies, I find the statement that in all the cantons of Switzerland, there are prisoners' aid societies which "protect prisoners in durance and assist them on release by providing tools and private employment;" also that "in most of the cantons the prisoners have a share in their own labor."

The light that Theosophy sheds upon the subject of punishment is clear and certain. It is based upon the teaching of the Masters in all ages. To one of these was given the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill." This one was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. We are told that he communed with God face to face for forty days on the holy mountain, after which the "skin of his face shone so that he had to wear a veil." In all history wise teachers, living above the clouds that obscure the sun of righteousness, have given all to the enlightenment and to the true redemption of the races as they were evolved on the different planets of this and other solar systems. These great ones exist today as in all times, though we may not recognize them, not at least, if we wait for signs and wonders, or temporal power. Their kingdom, they will show us, is not of this world. Always they teach the same lessons, the brotherhood of humanity, the divine nature of the soul, and hence the sacredness of its temple, the body; the insignificance of the personality, the all-importance of being guided by the divine voice within, which alone gives peace.

The teacher in the Bhagavad-Gita says: "The illuminated sage regards with equal mind the illuminated, selfless Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and even the outcast who eats the flesh of dogs." And again: "True wisdom of a spiritual kind is freedom from self-esteem, hypocrisy, and injury to others, . . . a constant, unwavering steadiness of heart upon the arrival of every event, whether favorable or unfavorable"

One notices a difference, slight though it may be, between the spirit of the teachers of the East and those of the West; but there is no vital difference, certainly none as to the duty we owe to all, even to the most unfortunate, the most sinful.

In that priceless little book by Mabel Collins, "Light on the Path," you will find these words, and with them I will end this effort: "Do not fancy that you can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. They are yourself, though in a less degree than your friend or your master. But if you allow the idea of

separateness from any evil thing or person to grow up within you, by so doing you create Karma, which will bind you to that person or thing till your soul recognizes that it cannot be isolated. Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame, for you are a part of it. Your Karma is inextricably interwoven with the great Karma. And before you can attain knowledge, you must have passed through all places, foul and clean alike. Therefore, remember that the soiled garment you shrink from touching, may have been yours yesterday, may be yours tomorrow. And if you turn with horror from it, when it is flung upon your shoulders, it will cling the more closely to you. The self-righteous man makes for himself a bed of mire. Abstain because it is right to abstain, not that yourself shall be kept clean."

ON THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

✓ We have been taught by Theosophy that the Divine Ray which gives birth to, and animates the Ego, is threefold, and that it may be described as manifesting Wisdom, Love, and Power.

These three manifestations of the Supreme, may be considered as finding their expression in the human microcosm, as Will, Imagination, Understanding, and Affection.

I take it that Imagination and Affection are the dual exponents of Love—the Understanding and the Will belonging to the Wisdom and the Power.

Every child born into the world has the possibility of each of these character elements in its composition; some have more of one, some of another quality predominating. The aim of all true and useful education is to enable the child in advancing years to bring all the qualities into equal play, so as to make a perfectly balanced character. A work of many, many lines, truly, but lines reduced in number, according to the measure of training which is assimilated in each life.

It is interesting to watch how much of one or another of these qualities, a child has brought over from previous incarnations, and the careful and observant parent or teacher will try to draw

the little one towards that quality in which it appears most deficient, while guiding it in the further development of those to which it seems more inclined.

The earliest and most natural bent of a child's mind is towards Love; at first not indeed much more than an animal instinct, involving trust and confidence, in that which is larger and stronger than itself; but soon an ingredient of conscious response comes in, we might almost call it gratitude, and then the child feels a reposeful dependence on the well-known kindness of its parent. So the Imagination begins to make an Ideal for itself, and the parent for the time being is the embodiment of that Ideal.

I am, of course, speaking only of parents who realize the least responsibility which devolves on them as directors of the first steps of the little ones, and who are themselves full of love.

Now we can see how, the child, having once grasped firmly the notion that its mother and father are superior beings to itself, an avenue is opened, wherein this holy chord of Love may be played upon by the judicious parent, and thus the first lessons in true symbology may be implanted in the young heart, the Ideal rising in time to those great ones who watch over and guide humanity, as well as to the mighty Lords, who administer the great law of "Karma," which is, in very truth, the Law of Love.

Although I have taken the highest form of Love, namely devotion to the mother, as the chief point to which the faithful parent should direct his child's budding Affection and Imagination, on the principle that the greater includes the lesser, yet there should not be a failure in showing the little one by example (which, after all, is worth many words) as well as by precept, that everything he sees around him demands from him the exercise of Love, be it the humble blade of grass, the animal, or the human fellow creature, consideration and compassion being felt for all.

And here comes in the opportunity of referring again to the greater lesson of striving to attain to those Masters of Love, who are All-compassion, All-consideration, because wholly emptied of selfishness.

In the next place we come to Wisdom, with which I have coupled Understanding. It may perhaps be argued that these are not synonymous terms, yet the one is undoubtedly the outcome of the other. True, there are some older Egos, in whom the

heaven Wisdom is born, showing itself in the quick apprehension of intuition in divine things, the Higher Manas from earliest childhood being highly developed. But such souls are rare. It is generally through Lower Manas, or what we may call Understanding by brain intelligence, that the mind rises by slow steps to the grasp of the Higher Wisdom. Therefore, while the lessons given to a child in this direction should be simple and few, the greatest care should be taken that the child really understands what it is taught.

I do not enter upon details of the vast and mighty subjects which belong to the Wisdom of the Ages, subjects which have indeed their top in Heaven, even though the foot thereof rest on earth, and of whose full glory even those who have climbed far up the ladder of the present evolution can but have touched the round. And yet each parent, in his place and measure, must select his own method in the choice of subjects from the great Text-book most fitted in his opinion for the capacity of the particular child.

And here comes in an ever-recurring difficulty. It is not every one, who in his small measure may have tensed some modicum of the treasures of "Wisdom," that can bring those treasures down to the simple understanding of the growing child. Yet should every parent, to whom Theosophical teaching has opened the fountain of Divine knowledge, seek to learn how to shed some drops of the fructifying draught on the child-consciousness of which he has the nurturing.

And so by degrees the little one is led up to the training of the Will, which is the mighty instrument for the development of Power, with its far-reaching possibilities. And this development begins, as it must of course, continues, and ends, in Self-training, the first effort of which must consist in the resisting of that which ministers to the lower nature. Let the child understand that obedience to the parent's wish is its first duty, even though it may interfere with its immediate self-pleasure. Even from the very first, I think that parents and teachers would do well to follow in their manner of education the lines on which the Law of "Karma" works. Make the children feel that every transgression against expressed rules must bring its own punishment, a punishment inflicted not in anger, but because it cannot be otherwise.

The parent should seek from the very beginning to produce in his child a sense of responsibility by giving to it some duty to fulfil, on the faithful discharge of which a small measure of further responsibility may be entrusted to it. These duties, with their augmenting scope, will increase with the advancing age, and the corresponding ones will grow upon the child's consciousness, as the duties expand in importance.

It is to the rising generation we have to look for the carrying on of the great work of helping forward the evolution of the race.

If parents would but realize the tremendous responsibility that belongs to them in the fact of their becoming parents, of being the vehicles for bringing back an Ego to learn another stage of Earth-experience, to tread another step, if so be, of the way that leads to the upward Path, they would surely look with a reverential eye on their little ones, and would feel that no care, no labor, however great, however incessant, is too much for them to bestow, if they can give an impetus to one Soul towards its evolution; for by just so much are they serving the Masters, in helping onward the perfecting of mankind.

M. O. LEACOCK.

THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD.

If, as the Esoteric Philosophy teaches, universal brotherhood is a living spiritual truth on the upper side of our nature, then it must be grounded in the very essence of things—in the root of being—and like every other aspect of spiritual truth, its analogies must be found on every plane below spirit.

All experience is in reality mental, the physical or objective side constituting only its expression. Hence brotherhood is the mental harmonic interflow of one common life; or the differing streams of our mental radiations making a unified manifestation.

Let us take for illustration physical man, linked as he is with his finer sheaths at every focal center of nerve force. His body and its "heavens" or enveloping atmosphere is a world, and that world is inhabited by millions of micro-organisms, physical, psycho-physical, psychic and so on. Every cell is a household

containing a unified family of molecules and atoms (Esoteric Philosophy says little souls), each particular set of forces busy in its own appointed work; for every cell in the human body, as well as in animals, is endowed with its own peculiar quality of intelligence and action. Different orders of consciousness function through these various centers, but all are linked under one top radiation—the energizing Atmic Ray. Man, therefore, in relation to the consciousness of the cells which he ensouls, unifies their groups into one perceptive focus; the multitudinous cells and atoms of consciousness give him a unified consciousness; he gets his coherent perception by apperception. This is as to the physical plane

Separateness, relatively speaking, as to the spiritual plane, oneness—all the lines of radiation being gathered into one point at the top of man's nature.

Two things, note well, are necessary in order to ensure completeness of working power within this little yet great world of man. First, unity in relation to the center, all forwarding the one law of orderly onflow in the body. Second, it is needful that each different atom of consciousness should perform its separate individual work, its appointed destiny. Here are the two ideas of separateness as to particular duty and unity as to the whole body. If the atom or the cell refused to work in concert with the whole, if it refused to become a free and open channel for the transmission of pranic force for the whole body, at once disorder would gather about that point, congestion would clog the pores, and disease prevail.

If this law of unity of basic principle coupled with diversity of expression be requisite for health on the physical plane, then the same law must hold good on the mental plane, since the mental creates the physical. And if universal brotherhood is needful among the atoms of man's nature on the material side as well as among its finer sheaths, then humanity as a body cannot thrive except under the same great law of harmony. The man who thinks and acts for self alone is like an atom in the human body attempting to set up housekeeping on its own account without reference to the world in which it dwells.

We, as members of our planet, cannot refuse the suggested analogy that we may be simply the atoms, so to speak, of a larger

organism responding to the two sets of action—psychic and noetic—psychic on the lower side, noetic on the upper, in greater or less degree, according to our development or lack of development. Upon the performance of our individual duty depends the harmony of the whole. And the individual duty—remember duty means what is due from us to others—the individual duty of each rests in the innermost mind or soul of each. Can we say that there, in that silent spot, shines the glory of the Golden Rule of love?

Universal Brotherhood must have its root in that silent center and thence spread gradually outward into the words, into the impulses, into the actions of the thinker who thus sets up in himself that divine primordial vibration. Thought moves the mind-atoms and the mind-atoms mould the man. Put love into your thoughts of others and the wave-lengths, the wave-motions of your mental ether, become rhythmic, constructive, allowing the great harmony of the top note of your nature to flow unobstructed through the lower channels. All that nature asks of us is not to become obstructionists. Give freely in order that you may receive, otherwise it will be a clear case of indigestion. Don't become a blockader of the pranic channels. Give of whatever you have; of your material gatherings, of your knowledge, but most of all of your good will and kindly thoughts. That storehouse of wealth is always to be commanded.

"Bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the son of one sweet mother." "Attune thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind," for "every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes" must find response in the soul of the disciple.

"Rise," therefore, "Awake! Seek the Great Teachers and Attend!
The road is narrow as a knife-edge, hard to tread!
But whose once perceiveth Him that Is,
Without a name, unseen, impalpable,
Bodiless, undiminished, unenlarged,
To senses undeclared, without an end,
Without beginning, timeless, higher than height,
Deeper than depth! Lo! Such a one is saved!
Death hath not power upon him!"

M. L. B.

A GLIMPSE OF HAWAIIAN FOLK LORE.

The child heart of primitive peoples touches closely the heart of mother nature, and through this sympathy they learn many a secret. Especially is this true of the Hawaiian people, whose religious practices reveal many an occult gleam to the student of Theosophy.

Those of the natives who have accepted the teachings of the Secret Doctrine say, "I see now the meaning of such a ceremony, I understand the root of such a belief."

It is evident that the first teachers of this people belonged to that ancient wisdom school from which all systems of belief have sprung but isolation and the ignorance arising therefrom perverted the old teachings into forms of magic, philosophy was lost, and a nature religion, more suited to the infantile minds, took its place; but still power and vision remained, as will be seen in this sketch.

In the olden days of Hawaii, before the landing of missionaries, before the selfish greed of mis-called civilization had destroyed the simple virtues of this childlike people there lived a prophecy to this effect: That when women gathered the berries of Pele* and entered the sacred place of that goddess, ruin would come to the islands of the ocean, and woman would be lost with her country. So ran the oracle, and naturally the ones in power decreed, that women should not gather the sacred berries nor enter the sacred place; and this prohibition became a "tabu" or sacred commandment, to violate which was death.

But the world moved on and brought the missionary and the merchant, to the islands of the ocean where the rainbow dwells. The tabus were mocked, and the Queen Kapiolana gathered the berries, and descending into the sacred place, threw them into the crater, in open defiance to the spirit of the volcano. The sun shone just as brightly after the daring act, and wise ones cried, "Death to superstition, death to prophecies." But was the prophecy a lie? Let us see. Today the sceptre has passed away from the Hawaiian people, their lands have been seized by the stranger, and they themselves are a vanishing race, decimated by disease. There was some little truth in the old prophecy, although

*Pele was goddess of fire, and her dwelling the volcano.

the evil did not depend on the gathering of berries by women; that was merely a sign and a token of a new phase of civilization, that would destroy the old. The old seer in looking upon the astral pictures of the passing away of his people, had failed to grasp the cause; then superstition and prejudice stepped in and supplied one. The same defect is very common today in psychic vision.

But foreseeing events was not their only power. Healing by silent thought was practiced by the priesthood, and this gift has not yet departed from their descendants. Not long ago a well-authenticated case occurred.

The last surviving child of some well known people lay very ill. Skilled doctors had done all in their power to restore the child, but in vain; the spark of life burned low and death seemed inevitable. Then the mother, a native Hawaiian, said to her husband, 'let me call a 'kahana', I have seen my two children die, the doctors could not cure them, they cannot cure this one. A kahana has other power.' The father desirous to please, yet very doubtful, assented. The kahana came, sat down silently by the dying child. In half an hour a natural sleep calmed the death spasms and the kahuna went away saying, "your child will get well, all danger is past." His words were verified by the rapid recovery of the child.

But every power can be used in two ways, for good or for ill, and the concentrated energy used for healing could also be used for killing. Unfortunately this perverted use of soul force was frequent, and "thinking or willing a person to death" was a well-known practice not confined to kahunas. On account of the strong fear of death natural to untaught people, a death-spell was very difficult to overcome.

Another very ancient world belief found among them, even today, is the belief that one person can, by occult means, give up life for another, and by so doing save that other from death. For example, a chief lies ill, and a faithful follower says, "I will die in place of my chief, I will give him my life." The follower dies and the chief lives. Strange as it may seem, facts go to substantiate the possibility of such transference of life.

The advanced among the island people believed in one supreme being—Kane, the Spirit of Good. The sun as his symbol

received divine honors, the sun temples were named Kaneloa. However, the love and fear of the many outflowed in worship of nature. That was near to them. The elemental intelligences or nature spirits responded, and a certain sympathy existed between mortal and spirit; when danger threatened the former the latter gave friendly warning. At the funerals of great chiefs the elements wailed in thunder and storm, and even the terrible Pele was known to listen in kindly fashion to the prayer of those who could speak with her.

Today people talk of the power of the late Princess Ruth over the fury of Kilawea. The volcano had forgotten its bounds, rivers of lava destroyed the villages and threatened the town of Hilo. The people were stricken with terror; then the princess felt the old power stir within her, and she resolved to have a talk with Pele. In spite of missionary influence she still believed in the conscious intelligence of the elements and nature forces, and in the possibility of controlling them by will and thought. She did not put it that way, for she knew nothing of science nor of metaphysics; she simply said "Pele is hungry. I will give her something to eat, then she will listen to me." The princess went to the volcano, propitiated Pele with sacrifice, and with mantram and invocation, bade the goddess calm her wrath. The volcano listened, stopped its outpouring of lava immediately, and ever since has behaved in an orderly manner. Such are the facts.

Shall we call the event a coincidence, or was the fat old princess a little of an occultist?

Many coincidences, just as singular as the foregoing, are to be found in the family histories and experiences of the Hawaiian people. The fact that the title "kahana" is today synonymous with sorcerer, is in itself significant. The psychic faculties and powers of this class were developed by inheritance as well as by training, for the priestly function was hereditary. Yet not all children of priestly families became kahanas, only certain chosen ones, those doubtless who were more specially endowed with soul powers. Those selected to be kahanas received training in schools directed by the priesthood. Here they were instructed in clairvoyance, concentration of thought, mantram singing, in the medicinal qualities of plants, in all the rites of their religion, and the arts of magic. The discipline of these schools was most severe;

expulsion followed the violation of the rules. It is asserted that any knowledge acquired during training vanished from the memory after expulsion. Students of occultism have heard of similar erasement from the brain of things heard and seen when it was not fit that the knowledge should be retained.

When engaged in healing or looking into futurity the kahanas wore a kapu (cloth of fine texture and brown in color), while a still finer kapu of white was worn in the temples. When speaking of temples, one must not imagine a building of stone, or even wood. Architecture was unknown to these dwellers in grass-woven huts, and the temples were very rude, simple affairs, sometimes merely a tree-shaded enclosure with a pile of rough stones for an altar.

The tabus were very severe on women; bananas were forbidden them (and many restraints point to the Mosaic law) yet women were instructed in occult lore, they could rule, and on the whole were much respected.

The daily lives of these people, in the olden times, were examples of practical Theosophy. They were kind and loving to each other, the strong helped the weak, and the more fortunate gave of their share to the less fortunate. Strangers received the heartiest hospitality. They were natural Theosophists, but the bigoted missionary, the mercenary trader, the unscrupulous politician, have done their work well. Nature-lore and soul power, the genial, kindly, spontaneity of the race, are disappearing with the picturesque grass huts. Even the language, rich in music and tenderness, is dying. In a few years it will be forgotten, for the schools ignore it. Only in history will the kahana, the mantram, the nature spirits figure, and there even they will be irre recognizable through misrepresentation. The old prophecy spoke truly. Farewell Hawaii.

M. A. W.

✓ "Hell was not created by any one. . . The fire of the angry mind produces the fire of hell, and consumes its possessor. When a person does evil, he lights the fire of hell, and burns with his own fire."

EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION.

There is an argument in favor of the doctrine of Reincarnation which Theosophists may well make use of with thinking people, and also with those whom Huxley calls "hasty thinkers." These are the people who have rejected the idea of special creation by divine fiat, and believe that something is never made of nothing. They have accepted the theory of evolution, that good law of eternal progression, as accounting for the formation of the universe from nebulous fire, mist, suns, and planets to physical forms of life. They see in evolution the only rational theory of the method of creation, that of emanation from invisible atoms into visible forms, through long ages of time. The scientists have described the continuity of forms, appearing on our earth crust, in a logical sequence from simple to complex. Others have described the evidence of life, beginning even in the crystal and gradually increasing in capacity for sensation and motion in plants and animals. They further remark the absence of distinct lines, between the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, in their evidence of gradually growing degrees of ability to function in those forms. Mark you that the absence of these lines, is not that of form alone, but what the indwelling consciousness can do with that form. [There are organisms in nature that must be classified as vegetable, which have the power of sensation and motion.]

There are organisms that must be classified as animals, which have no power of motion, such as corals, for a long time considered as vegetable formation. The evolution here is more marked in the life than in the form, even at so low a stage of development.

These same scientists describe the instincts and the appearance of intelligence in kingdoms below man. Books and books have been written on the growth of intelligence, emotions, and reason in animals. The psychologist adds new chapters of theories, on mental development and tries to discover the law of unfoldment to apply in kindergarten or manual training. Again look at that masterpiece of self analysis, the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, the "I" standing outside and watching the processes in his own consciousness of ever increasing fineness of discrimination. The keystone to Spencer's philosophy is evolution.

This gradual growth of life, in capacity of knowing, doing, and feeling, is the law of evolution, applied to the inner being, as it has been to the outer form. It shows the same law of creation at work, in the higher realms of life, called consciousness, as in the building of forms to express that consciousness. As above, so below, is the law of creation, evolution.

In affirming that this force in forms, call it life, consciousness, intelligence, mind or soul, whichever you please, is subject to the law of growth, in any one life, scientists have admitted more than they realize. If it can grow, who can say what its limits are, either of past or future?

Scientists fail to see the force of their own evidence. They watch the continuity of form in nature's panorama of lives marching through past ages to present, and fail to connect the logical sequence of forms by a thread of logically developing consciousness. They supply a new hero (by an act of special creation?) for every life and chapter in this story, in place of following one ever-growing inner consciousness, evolving side by side, in and through the use of ever-changing forms.

There is a missing link in their evidence of growth, which will connect the parts into a whole and put it into shape as a working theory. That is the element of time needed for invisible as well as visible evolution. If the mind is subject to the law of growth from simple to complex, any complex consciousness in its organized form must have come into birth from a past. Something is never made of nothing, and nature never does anything by leaps. If it has taken æons of time and repeated buildings of forms in the past to arrive at the form called human, it must also have taken æons of time of inner growth in those forms to develop a consciousness capable of receiving an individual and immortal soul at the end of the animal evolution and the beginning of the man's.

It must have also taken long periods of time in many lives for a soul, coming first into the savage state, to develop into that of the delicate and powerful soul, capable of feeling and knowing and doing what Shakespeare or Lincoln did. It is rational to accept a long past for the growth of this complicated organism we call body, and deny it for that of the complicated consciousness we call the soul.

This continuity of life as well as of form, is what evolutionists fail to see and it is the soul of evolution which reincarnationists supply. What meaning has this evolution of forms, divorced from its companion evolution of life, growing more complex and powerful as the form does? What is the purpose, not only of this mighty procession of forms, but the progressive complexity of those forms with its corresponding sequence of inner development.

If evolution of form has no larger purpose than form building, then is evolution a farce. If the form exists to picture forth the stage of development of the indwelling consciousness and to give a means for obtaining a larger and fuller life through experiences, both of knowledge and love, through lessons of both pleasure and pain, then is evolution rational, and nature one complete harmony of growth. We then can read a deep meaning in the lessons of the biologist. In each form is found the dying organs of obsolete conditions, organs in full activity, and also the seeds or germs of those for future development in the next form. In each is written past history, present activity, and future possibilities. The germ of frog's legs and lungs in the tadpole illustrate the the process of future development.

This theory of repeated lives regards the evolution of the soul as well as the body with an entirely new factor as the dividing line between the animal and man. The development of form in animal and its pure consciousness gives place to the development of brain and nervous system through the accumulation of grey cells and the evolution of self-consciousness through perfection of memory, in man, the "thinker." The evolution towards individualism in the animal gives place with the attainment of individuality to the development of altruism, the struggle for self-existence to struggle for others. This process of evolution purely mental, moral, and spiritual, a process of expansion of consciousness of the true self developes other faculties than sense perceptions, which are found non-germinal in many, and spoken of as the sixth sense. This new faculty, variously called clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, hypnotism, and what not, names given to cover our ignorance, will unfold possibilities of the future development as evolution goes on. These non-germinal, like the butterfly wings in the grub, give a hint to future perfection of man

at present a long way off. Each man is then regarded as at a stage of evolution corresponding to what he seeks, in what activity he finds pleasure, whether animal, aesthetic, intellectual, or spiritual, with selfish or unselfish motives. Nature does nothing by leaps, the growth out of the animal into the spiritual is slow, and the bridge between the two is the mental and moral activity gradually developing in the soul of each, according to the desires in each. When we consider the little that can be accomplished in one life, what can be the method of evolution but reincarnation? What is evolution without reincarnation? It is like the story of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. There is no meaning in it. Reincarnation is God's method of evolution, as evolution is God's method of creation. Indeed, have we not the same kind of proof for reincarnation that we have for evolution?

Either there has been a connected link of sequence, carried on at each center of consciousness, by means of some such law of invisible involution, as the law of conservation of force and thereby a continuity of life from form to form, or there has been no evolution.

These ideas of evolution, involution, and reincarnation have been put before those evolutionists whom Huxley speaks of as "hasty thinkers," who fail to see that the "doctrine of transmigration reincarnation, like that of evolution itself, has its roots in the world of reality." In a few cases there came an honest and rather surprised reply, "Why, I never thought of it in that light." Their minds were in the state of a saturated solution, and needed only one more crystal to solidify into conviction.

While the foregoing argument seems to Theosophists like trying to prove that two halves make a whole, we know that to many so-called evolutionists it is not axiomatic. Into the minds of these, who have done enough thinking to reject the idea of special creation and who do believe in the law of physical evolution, it can do no harm to drop this seed. The questions are easily and shortly put. "You say you believe in evolution?" "What is evolution without reincarnation?" It may take a long time to sprout, but come to the surface it must, with the amount of evidence continually pouring in from the scientific world to water and nourish the germ

Some day a large soul, with a past for honesty and sound judgment, in the public confidence, will be found with brains and courage enough to announce from pulpit desk or professor's chair, his conviction of the truth of the doctrine of reincarnation, and the world will be surprised at the number who will follow his lead, many of whom have really long felt its inherent rationality.

To the evolutionist, who sees the slow building of form, up the scale towards the perfection of the human, and again the gradual perfection of that intricate nervous system and brain, is it not just as marvelous to follow the development of the inner being?

This expanding consciousness is the constant reminder of a divine and spiritual builder brooding over the evolution with a divine purpose. Step by step, the form and life grow, because of the divine latency in every form from atom to man, bringing ever more and more into consciousness through activity. The two, physical and mental evolution, are knit into one by the spiritual.

The glory of man is not what he was, in past stages of evolution, nor what he is today in the highest and noblest of his kind, but what he is destined to be in the future. The glory of the architect could not be in creating, instantaneously, automatic beings, perfect like himself, who would always do right because they knew no wrong, but in evolving through growing forms and intelligence, self-conscious entities, who choose the right from knowledge gained in all varieties of experiences, and who have expanded this self-consciousness in accordance with the ever present pattern set up in the divine mind. D.

DAWN.

I spoke with my soul in the darkness
That compassed the world about,
I talked with my soul in the darkness
That wonderful men call Doubt.

I said, "There will be no Hereafter,
'Tis but a dream to deceive,"
I said, "There can be no Hereafter."
My soul refused to believe,

I laughed at my soul and I whispered,
"Our life is naught but a night."
I laughed at my soul till it whispered,
"The East, there breaketh the light!"

Leo.

T. S. ECHOES.

THE COUNTESS WACHTMEISTER'S MONTHLY LETTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF MERCURY:

On January 10th I attended the New York study class, which was formed for the deeper study into Theosophical truths, and admits as members only those belonging to the Theosophical Society. As there are many who have but recently joined the society, and are unfamiliar with even the fundamental teachings of the philosophy, this class is taking up for study the manuals, one after the other, thence to proceed to the "The Ancient Wisdom," and the more abstruse works of Madame Blavatsky. We discussed ways and means of developing the members so that not only would they have a more comprehensive understanding of these great truths, but would be able to talk intelligently and interestingly on the subjects. The difficulty met in all branches is not ignorance of the teachings, but the readiness and ability of our members to "think on their feet." In the different lodges there are comparatively few members who can answer concisely and clearly the questions asked by seekers after truth. The New York study class contains many bright men and women, and we expect good work from them. On the 11th I was invited by Dr. J. Guelph Norman, of the Royal Asiatic Academy, to speak at his house. The large parlors were well filled, and the questions asked showed a lively interest in Theosophy and its bearings on daily life. A most pleasant evening was spent by all present. The laws governing and developing the higher nature of man were expatiated upon, and no doubt the seeds have fallen where they will bring forth good fruit. The evening of the 12th I was again at the home of Mrs. Baldwin, for the purpose of receiving guests and answering any questions they might have to propound. A goodly number of people were present and hypnotism, spiritualism, and the various points as explained by Theosophy were discussed. Two persons joined the Society from this meeting. On the evening of the 13th I lectured in Brooklyn, on Theosophy and Christianity. Most church people have the idea that Theosophy is antagonistic to the teachings of Christ, and it is always a satisfaction to me to be able to speak on this subject and to prove to them that a knowledge of Theosophy explains and makes clear the hidden meanings in the teachings of the great teacher, Jesus Christ. The afternoon of January 15th I spoke to a club of ladies at Newark. They were intensely interested, and wanted their husbands to hear me, so they arranged to attend my public lecture in large force the following evening. I spoke in the afternoon of the next day, January 16th, at the home of Mrs. Newton, widow of the late Mr. Newton, so prominently known in Spiritualistic circles. In the evening I went back to Newark, as arranged, and delivered a lecture on "Death and After." The audience, and also one of those present on the occasion of the founding of the T. S., manifested a great deal of interest in the subject, and many ladies and gentlemen came up after the lecture to speak to me, and said that they never heard more clear and logical reasoning or better proofs offered as to the continuity of life after death. On the 17th I held a morning meeting at the home of Miss Roberts, for the purpose of questions and answers, and in the evening a meeting at Mrs. Wheelright's, who is a member of our society. Several trained nurses were present, all of whom showed a lively curiosity

about Theosophy. On the evening of the 18th Dr. Norman gave at his home a most interesting and instructive talk on the teachings and healing powers of the Hindu Yogis. As Jesus always healed first, then taught, so these Yogis make well the body and mind before they begin to teach. Dr. Norman spent so many years in India, and in the caves and jungles of Burma, that he talked upon his subject with that understanding and authority which knowledge alone gives. The evening of the 19th was again spent at Mrs. Baldwin's, answering questions. The question of cruelty to animals came up and Miss Houston read aloud a paper that I had written for the "Animal's Friend" on that subject. The 20th I was invited to speak at the residence of Rev. Mr. Frank, who has established an independent church, and also is at the head of the "Don't Worry" clubs. The 21st was the regular meeting of the New York Lodge. Mr. Shapleigh, ex-president of the branch in Boston, and a very clever musician, read a paper on the occult principle in music. His knowledge and treatment of the subject was most interesting, tracing the development of music from its most crude noises or primitive forms to our scale, with all its varied and complicated possibilities. On the evening of the 23rd, I met a number of fashionable ladies at the home of Mrs. Dr. Hart. And a strange coincidence, almost all the ladies present were from the West. Dr. and Mrs. Hart are but recent additions to our society and they seem to be much engrossed in Theosophical teachings. The evening of the 23rd I spent at the home of Miss Percy Haswell, a prominent young actress, at present leading lady with Wm. M. Crane. There were many representative members of the theatrical profession present, among them Mrs. Gilbert, of Daly's. We had a very pleasant evening, and all present showed much interest in the doctrine of reincarnation, especially one young actor who wanted to know whether his present wife would not be his wife in his next incarnation. They are still in their honeymoon, and their devotion to each other is very marked. On the evening of the 24th, the New York Branch gave a social at Walton Hall. The evening was devoted to music, recitations, and a generally friendly intercourse. The members were made acquainted with each other, and all enjoyed the entertainment most heartily. I gave a little talk upon the objects of the society, and the great benefits derived by its members from being brought into closer relation with the great souls who are working for the uplifting of humanity.

REPORTS OF BRANCHES.

LILY DALE, N. Y., Feb. 14, 1898—A Spiritualistic camp was established here in 1880, since which time the place has become fairly well known throughout the world as one of the leading Spiritualistic camp, of America. It is generally known as "Cassadaga Camp." For several years it has been the summer resort of thousands of people from all parts of the Union, with a noticeable sprinkling of visitors from various foreign countries. Although a strong feeling of antagonism has arisen during the last few years in the minds of many Modern Spiritualists, relative to Theosophy, due to misapprehensions arising from various acts of parties professing to be Theosophists, yet many of the campers have gradually adopted Theosophic ideas. Two of the Camp's best and most popular speakers, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond of Washington, D. C., and W. J. Colville of Boston, have for several years taught Theosophy in a most pronounced manner. Also Harrison D. Barrell, editor of the Boston "*Banner of Light*," who for seven years was Cassadaga Camp's able and most

efficient chairman, is an outspoken exponent of Theosophical principles. Several efforts have been made to establish a Theosophical Centre here, once by Claude Falls Wright in 1893 or 1894, and later in an attempt to secure Mrs. Fingley for an address; but efforts failed until the advent of Annie Besant and Countess Wachtmeister, who visited the camp in August of 1897, and captured the attention and interest of a large number of people. Their visit, though brief, resulted in a chartered organization, mostly of people from other states, so that at the close of the camp, the interest abated. In January, F. E. Titus, F. T. S., of Toronto, Canada, who is looking after new branches in western New York and Ohio, spent a week at Lily Dale, lecturing evenings and holding classes and receptions during the day. Mr. Titus, who is the happy possessor of winning ways and forceful thought, made many friends and renewed the interest in the cause. The branch was reorganized, several new members added, all of whom are Dale residents, weekly meetings are held at the residence of Judge Baillet. It was thought best to open the meetings to the public, and visitors are a weekly occurrence. It is hoped and expected the cause will prosper here, as it is a beautiful summer resort, enclosed by a chain of lakes, with every facility for health, recreation, and instruction, there being a fine large library of occultism free to the public, high altitude, salubrious air, pure water, and beautiful scenery. Chautauqua County is fast becoming noted among American and foreign tourists. The Countess and Mrs. Besant were especially pleased with the beauties of Lily Dale and its abundance of white water lilies, whose snowy crests gleam upon the fair surface of Casadaga's verdur-efringed lakes, like silver stars from the depths of a midnight sky in June. J. E. HYDE, Cor. Sec.

LOS ANGELES, CAL., Jan. 25, 1898—Since my last report to MERCURY the members of Harmony Lodge have been very busy preparing and delivering lectures. On January 30th Mrs. H. Randolph delivered an excellent lecture on "The Invisible Helpers of Man." February 6th Mr. Christian Mickelsen lectured on "The Iron Age of the Present and The Golden Age of the Future." He concluded with the following: "There is one universal law. When man learns to obey it he plucks the fruit from the tree of life and sees the dawn of the Golden Age." February 13th Mr. Randolph read a lecture of Mr. Fullerton's entitled "Common Sense." On February 14th we had our regular monthly social. The evening was spent very pleasantly with music and recitations. Our friend, Mr. W. C. Bailey, has returned from Arizona, and was with us on this occasion, and to the delight of all, gave an idea of frontier life as a Theosophical lecturer. We were all brought to realize the great need of Theosophical propaganda when we listened to the heart-rending scenes of evil which Mr. Bailey described. February 20th Mr. Bailey delivered a most interesting and instructive lecture on "The Mysteries," which was received with marked attention by a large audience. We have every reason to feel hopeful of the future. S. MICHELSEN, Sec'y.

NEW YORK CITY.—The Countess Wachtmeister, who has been the guest of Professor Guelph Norman at the Royal Asiatic Academy, 316 East 15th street, was entertained in the spacious reception rooms of the academy on Tuesday evening, February 1st. She has been lecturing in America for the past two years in the cause of Theosophy, and has just concluded her mission in New York. She will proceed to Philadelphia and Washington, lecturing en-

route to Chicago, which city she reaches in May, to be present at the forthcoming convention. The reception held in her honor was well attended. Mr. Alexander Fullerton, General Secretary American Section Theosophical Society, presided, representatives of the various branches taking part, and messages of greeting were read from those unable to attend. Mrs. Lena Sittig of Brooklyn, N. Y. was responsible for a most interesting program, comprising music, song, recitations and some very amusing character sketches. The Countess made some most touching remarks concerning her health and eye sight. For more than twenty years, she said, her eye sight had been failing, and, two years ago, she was told that she must soon become blind. Urged on by the knowledge of the terrible affliction that overshadowed her, she set out for America, abandoning all hope of saving her sight, but determined to continue her labors that she might accomplish as much as possible before the end came. Daily she has perceived the light gradually fading, fully resigned to the perpetual darkness which she felt must soon close around her. "But now," she said, "I cannot help expressing my deepest gratitude for the great and unexpected blessing that has been bestowed upon me within the last five days, by an Oriental Occultist who has recently arrived in this country from the far East, who has enabled me to throw aside my glasses and now I find myself suddenly able, once again, to look upon the beauties of nature. With renewed health and sight, I am now able to get through my correspondence without spectacles, with a light and cheerful heart and profound gratitude for the great privilege of being permitted to continue my labors for the good of my fellow man."

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., March 6th—Golden Gate Lodge has had a very busy month. We have not lost interest, however, in our regular course of study, which prove most interesting. The following public lectures have been given on Sunday evenings: "Evolution and The Physical Man," by Mrs. A. Best; "The Joys and Sorrows of the Atom," by Prof. Bailey; "The Histology and Psychology of the Cell," by Dr. Brackett; "War or Peace," by Miss M. A. Walsh.

HONOLULU, H. I., Feb. 15th.—Aloha Lodge has started a new beginner's class with a membership of twenty-two students. Two new members have joined the branch, and many more are expected to join shortly. Dr. A. Marques has been again elected president of the branch. With Mr. W. R. Simms, secretary, Mr. A. Sharpe, Treasurer, and Miss Oliver, Librarian.

TORONTO, CANADA, Feb. 1898—We have just had our Seventh Anniversary, which was very successful, also our annual election of officers. Our secretary reports that the year commenced with a membership of nineteen and closed with thirty. Subjects of lectures were; "Evolution," "Hudson's Law of Psychic Phenomena," "Whence and Whither," "The Elder Brothers of Humanity" "The Ancient Wisdom" is still the text-book for the study class. Mr. Titus, who is still away lecturing, reports great success. We have a system for replenishing the library that is working very well. A few members organized a book company, purchased a stock of the leading Theosophical publications, then sold outright when desired, or loaned out for five or ten cents per week,

according to the value of the book, then every three months books to the amount of the loan fund are turned over to the free library. I would commend this plan to the consideration of those branches that desire to establish a library with a minimum of expense.

CHICAGO, ILL.—I had hoped to have a whole budget of news to send this month, but really there is nothing. We have been very quiet and rest is good at intervals. We have taken in two or three new members, and a number of new books have been given to the branch library. The last gift was the autobiography of Mrs. Besant, a book we have needed a long time, and it will be kept pretty well in circulation. The Council of the American Section, T. S., has been invited by the Chicago Branch to hold the next annual convention of the Section in Chicago, offering the use of our rooms and such entertainment as we are able to provide. I suppose this will be old news, as it is written before the February issue of *MERCURY*, which will probably give the date of the Convention. We have spent six weeks on the first chapter of "Ancient Wisdom." Some evenings we would only take up one question of the syllabus, and I openly believe we could spend six more weeks on the same chapter very profitably. One evening we put aside the regular study for a talk on "Vegetarianism, or Food, Occult and Material," by Dr. Ella Thornton Nash. You see we are trying to keep ourselves in all directions, and isn't that right? The Sunday lectures are going on, and the attendance is increasing. Next Sunday, February 20th, Mrs. Sears will speak, the subject being "A Sketch of Annie Besant's Life." And the following Sunday lecture will be given by Mrs. Josephine Locke, the subject being "The Spiritual Idea in conduct." I think you have every bit of news now. You know I warned you that the supply was short, but I can say this in closing, that the Chicago Branch is working along, slowly perhaps, but steadily, surely, sincerely, and harmoniously. We are striving to learn. It is through knowledge we grow, and by knowledge we can help. Ignorance keeps us veiled from the light that is waiting to break into our developing, groping souls, through ignorance we stumble and fall. Its illusions blind us, and straight against the law we rush in our loaded state. Not ignorance alone of our intellects, but far worse, the ignorance of a hardened heart, an unwilling hand, an ungentle word. It is often heart-knowledge that we need, far more than head-learning, and perhaps it will carry us farther along the path. "Yea, ignorance is like unto a closed and airless vessel; the soul a bird shut up within. It warbles not, nor can it stir a feather, but the songster mute and torpid sits, and of exhaustion dies. But even ignorance is better than head-learning with no soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it."

P. G. K.

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Feb. 14th.—Our study has received another impetus in the visit of Mr. Titus of Toronto. He came to us on Tuesday, February 1st, and remained two weeks. Open meetings were held at the society's rooms, No. 355 Prospect street, on all evenings not otherwise engaged; and on the two Sunday afternoons, lectures were delivered by request to the Society of Spiritualists. These were largely attended and much interest was manifested. Several parlor talks were given to numbers ranging from ten to twenty, and the last two evenings were devoted expressly to the members of the branch. These two evenings were of great value in teaching the members how to study

and work to get the best understanding and make good progress. Mr. Titus was everywhere received with pleasure, and much profit resulted, as he is a most able exponent and teacher of Theosophy. There were twenty new members added to the society. With the increased membership it has been decided to hold the meetings of the branch weekly hereafter, in place of once in two weeks, as has been the custom. The formation also of a Lotus Club is in progress.

HELEN B. OLMSTED, Sec'y.

NEW ZEALAND SECTION, January, 1898—The New Zealand Section held its Second Annual Convention in Auckland, on January 3d and 4th. Auckland, Christchurch, Woodville, and Waitemata Branches sent delegates. Dunedin, Wellington, and Pahiatua were represented by proxy. Wanganui could not send a delegate, but an "unattached" member from there was present, and also a Dunedin member, so that the Convention was fairly represented, and the happy spirit of harmony which prevailed all through the proceedings will be carried from it and will strengthen the whole Section in its work of helping on the brotherhood of the human race. The general secretary reported a very fair increase in membership during the year. The figures are not large, the Section is still a small one, but it is growing steadily and can look forward with confidence to the future. The press reports of the Convention, sent to all the leading newspapers show that the Theosophical Society is one of the recognized institutions of the country. The report also dealt with the doings of the past year. It has been an eventful one in the history of the Section, owing to the visit of the first General Secretary to Australia, the visit of the President-Founder to New Zealand, and Miss Edger's final departure for India. Various schemes for increasing the usefulness of the Section, recommended by the last Convention, have during the year been brought to a successful issue. The Convention discussed the questions of correspondence among members, the establishment of a lending library, various schemes of propaganda, including one through the medium of the press received from America from the Countess Wachtmeister, found to be successful there, and the increase of the sectional income, regarding all of which resolutions were passed. Several alterations were made in the rules, and the branches now have the same voting power, when the vote is taken by correspondence, as at a Convention, and the rule regarding admission of new members, is practically on the lines of the general constitution of the society, giving presidents of branches power to admit new members. All the proposals were carried unanimously. This concluded the business of the Convention, but in addition two public meetings were held at which addresses were given by the General Secretary and some of the delegates, both of which were very successful. Social meetings were held at the houses of various members, and two picnics were given, all of which added greatly to the pleasure and the success of the occasion.

AN APPEAL FROM CEYLON.

COLOMBO, CEYLON, Jan. 11, 1898.

DEAR FRIENDS:

I have been in this Island, a little over six years, spending all my energy, time, and means to do what little I can to raise the condition of Singhalese women. My efforts, I am thankful to say, are now beginning to show success-

ful results. The obstacles I have had to contend with and the troubles I have had to undergo, while working in an Eastern clime with an Eastern nation, are matters of the past, and the way now, comparatively free from trials and troubles, lies open for further progress. During this time through the help of kind friends, I have founded a school and orphanage and it is named, by the earnest request of friends, after my family, *The Musaeus School and Orphanage*. I have under my protection and care over fifty Singhalese girls of ages varying from seven to fifteen years, and they live with me under the same roof. I teach them, with the help of a few assistants, such subjects as are best suited to make them useful women and helpful members of society. I am thankful to say that those of our pupils who have left us to begin life in their new homes are grateful to us for what knowledge we have been able to give them, and they perceive themselves the marked contrast that lies between them and their less favored sisters, who have not had the advantage of a more progressive education. Dear friends, you who live in the West cannot conceive of the ignorance that prevails among Eastern women! The girls who attend this institution are Buddhists, and since the Christian missionaries work with one object alone in view, namely, to convert them to Christianity, they would, if not for the education here, sink further into the depths of ignorance. Our aim is to educate them and brighten their lives, without interfering with their faith, in fact teaching them according to their own Buddhist ethics. This work is a most important one, and by no means a light one, and requires much attention and help to ensure its continuous success. Who of you, dear readers, will lend a helping hand to carry out this work? The services of some European or American ladies are urgently needed. Is there anyone who is willing to make some sacrifice to help on this portion of Theosophic work? Who will come? The school has also grown so large that we shall be obliged to extend our premises, but at present, funds are wanting to build. Can any give us help here, and make contributions, however small they may be, towards a building fund? Trusting that all my readers will pardon this importunity, and help me to the best of their ability, I am

Yours Fraternally,

MARIE MUSAEUS HIGGINS.

BOOK REVIEWS.

The February number of *The Theosophical Review* offers its readers a variety of attractive articles. The "Watch-Tower" begins with a brief outline of Mrs. Besant's Scandinavian tour, during which she has carried on the work at her usual high pressure, and with the usual result of inspiring all with new life and love for Theosophy. The other editorial articles all point to the fact that modern philosophy, science, and religion are coming to one point, and in their coming together they are led by the Theosophical idea. Mr. Leadbeater deals with the Nicene and the Apostles' Creeds in his continued article, "The Christian Creed" and shows that beneath the materialized ideas of the Christian Church there lies the divine idea. In his short article on "The Gnostics", Mr. Mead considers Ptolemy's profound interpretation to the beginning of the Gospel of St. John. We only wish it were longer. Prof. Mackenzie's paper on

"Theosophy and the New Astronomy" furnishes new scientific corroborations to the truths found in the Secret Doctrine. How a Russian woman found Christ is beautifully, told in the little story called "A Vision of Christ." Mrs. B-sant gives us the highest conception of the Theosophical idea of prayer. The purest form of which is adoration, the mute ecstasy of the mystic. The longest and perhaps the most delightful article of this number is W. O. Ward's paper on "The Relation of Art to Theosophy." His idea is that the work of the artist is beautiful in proportion to his perception of the eternal idea in the mind of God; that in the highest sense beauty, goodness, truth, and love are all identical, and but different aspects of the one reality.

In the chapter of "Old Diary Leaves," which forms the first article of the January *Theosophist*, Col. Olcott deals with the troublesome Society for Psychical Research. "Notes on Reincarnation" is a clear and logical attempt by S. Stuart to prove reincarnation by arguments founded upon physical science. "Where Brahman and Buddhist Meet," by J. C. Chattopādhyāya, is copied from the November number of the *Theosophical Review*, and shows that the two religions have the same ethical basis. The "Imperishability of the Perispirit" is a purely Spiritualistic paper, the writer of which evidently has yet to learn that we have many astral bodies.

The Report of the Seventy-second Anniversary of the Theosophical Society gives a most encouraging account of the Theosophical movement in all parts of the world. The President-Founder says in his address; "The phenomenal growth of our society during the past year has no parallel in our previous history. Sixty-four new branches have been added to our list. "Thirty-seven of these are in the American Section.

"The Ganglionic Nervous System" opens the February number of *Intelligence*. The writer, Mr. Alexander Wilder, M. D., is of the opinion that this system precedes the cerebro-spinal nervous system, and is the germ of everything that is afterward developed. "The Mysterious Key of an Occult Tragedy" comes to a tragic end. The serial story "The Empire of the Invisibles" continues bright and entertaining. The editorial on "The Folly of Worry" to its he point as we all know by experience. "Truth, the Basis of Knowledge," is copied from *The Theosophist*. William P. Jones gives "Twenty Arguments in Favor of Reincarnation." "The Secret Mail in India," is a reprint from the *Providence Journal*.

Self-Knowledge contains a good paper on "Heredity and Reincarnation" by Chas. H. Conner. This little magazine would be greatly improved by a plain paper cover and a table of contents.

The Oracle, a monthly exponent of the West Gate Philosophy, published in Boston, gives a plan for a prospective colony to be founded in the Republic of Mexico.

The Exodus, published by the Gestefeld Publishing Company, New York, is a helpful little Journal. We would be glad to see the names of its contributors signed to their respective articles. "Shelley's Spiritual Philosophy" is the opening paper in the December "Dawn." The remainder of the number consists chiefly of "Sri Ramakrishna's Gospel," and comments upon the same.

A lecture delivered before the Blavatsky Lodge, Bombay, on "The Pilgrim's Progress," is the first paper in *The Theosophical Gleaner* for January, in which the different stages of the Theosophical life are sketched. "Who is Julia," is an interesting paper on the Spiritualistic movement, which concludes with these words: "How wise the teaching of the East, which discountenances

all dealings with those who have passed from earth. Our duty is to hasten their passage through the dark regions of Karma Loka, that they may glide smoothly and swiftly into the joy of Devachan." This number also gives the addresses of welcome to Col. Olcott and Miss Edger, on their arrival in Madras, in December, by the two Madras Branches and the Indian Section of the T. S.

Le Lotus Bleu for January has for its first article a long account of Mrs. Besant's visit to France, which is followed by a report of the lecture given by her in Paris on "Theosophy and the Problems of Life." Then comes "Art and Man," a paper on the "Psychology of Art," illustrated by a diagram of correspondences between the seven principles of man, and harmony, melody, sythme, color, light, shade, etc. Mr. Leadbeater's article on "Devachan" is continued.

With the January number *Sophia* enters upon its sixth year, and begins with a general survey of the situation and plans for work. "Genesis" by Senor Soria is continued in the first and second numbers. "Incidents in the life of Countess de St. Germain," by Mrs. Cooper Oakley is copied from the *The Theosophical Review*. "Reincarnation" by Mrs. Besant is continued.

Theosophia is the name of the first purely Theosophical journal to see the light in Italy. It is published monthly by the Theosophical Lodge of Rome. The editor opens with a short address on the movement in general and is followed by Mrs. Besant, with an explanation of "What Theosophy is." Then comes a translation of that valuable work, "Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy," by our indefatigable brother, Dr. A. Marques. "Occultism and Theosophy," by Decio Calvari, and a short account of the journeys of Mrs. Besant, Countess Wachtmeister, Col. Olcott, and Miss Edger complete the first number of this new venture, which we wish every success.

Another new periodical is the *L'Idee Theosophique*, published in Brussels. The first number consists almost entirely of an article on the Spiritualistic system of Collins, and manifold notes on the system of Theosophy.

The organ of the Scandinavian Section, *Teosofisk Tidskrift*, published in Stockholm, has for the frontispiece to the January number a half-tone picture of Mrs. Besant. It also has two translations from her writings on "Theosophy" and "Occult Chemistry," with a reproduction of the plate showing the changes of the chemical elements.

The January number of *Balder*, published in Christiania, also consists mostly of translations from the works of Mrs. Besant. The "Ceasing of Sorrow," "The Physical World" from "The Ancient Wisdom." An editorial by Richard Eriksen on "conscientiousness" completes this number.

Other periodicals received are, *Rays of Light*, *The Vahan*, *The Prasnotara*, *The Brahmavadin*, *Awakened India*, *The Light of Truth*, *Die Uebersinnliche Welt*, *Journal Maha Bodhi Society*, *The Hindu*, *Arjuna*, *Reformador*, *Voice of Labor*, *Human Nature*, *The Philosophical Journal*.

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